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Making Connections

Sound Transit 2
The Regional Transit System Plan
For Central Puget Sound

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Sound Transit 2

Contents

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Appendices

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Introduction

This Sound Transit 2 plan responds to the growing urgency of confronting the Central Puget Sound Region's transportation problems and the public's strong support for expanding mass transit.

Intensive public outreach and analysis of options show that challenges from rising population levels, environmental concerns and economic factors including rising fuel costs warrant continued investment in transit. Public views expressed to Sound Transit through written and phoned comments, testimony and surveys over the last four years confirms that our region lags behind other regions of comparable size. Public input reflects concern that the current system should be improved to offer more modal options, improved travel times, service frequencies, reliability and capacity to handling continuing population growth.

In 1996 voters of the region approved Sound Move, directing Sound Transit to build the first phase of a regional transit system. Sounder commuter trains currently operate in a 74-mile corridor from Everett to Tacoma, with an 8-mile extension to Lakewood underway. ST Express buses operate on every major highway in the region. Link light rail serves downtown Tacoma, and it will open for service between Seattle and Sea-Tac International Airport in 2009. Final design for the Link light rail extension between downtown Seattle and the University District is underway, and service is planned to start in 2016.

Together, these services carry more than 15 million riders a year reliably around the region to jobs, shopping, school, sporting events and other places they need to go.

Today Sound Transit delivers mass transit services across the most populated areas of Pierce, King and Snohomish counties, connecting more than 50 cities. More than 40 percent of Washington's population now calls the Sound Transit District home. Sound

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Transit's service become more and more important as the region's population continues to grow by approximately 45,000 annually.

Transit demand in the region's major corridors is projected to nearly double or triple, with expected increases of 150% across Lake Washington, 160% across the Ship Canal Bridge on I-5, 180% in South King County (taking both I-5 and SR 167 into account), and about 70% on I-5 at the King/Snohomish County line.

The growth and resulting congestion already has a profound impact on daily commutes, and the impact on commuters will only increase without the addition of ways to avoid rising gridlock. Personal vehicles will continue to play a significant role in the region but are becoming less and less reliable. For example, a vehicle trip from downtown Seattle to downtown Bellevue would take about 11 minutes if driven at posted speed limits. Today, a driver leaving Seattle for Bellevue in the evening needs to allow more than double that time—26 minutes—to reliably arrive on time 95% of the time. Population growth will worsen the challenge. In comparison, a light rail trip from Seattle to Bellevue would take only 19 minutes regardless of road conditions and congestion. With more jobs and people on the way, the time is now to continue building our transportation future.

In response to these challenges and opportunities, Sound Transit is proposing a plan that builds on the *Sound Move* program called Sound Transit 2. The plan responds to the input Sound Transit received after the failure of the 2007 Roads & Transit ballot measure, known as Proposition 1. Community members felt the combined roads and transit projects resulted in a plan that was too big, and didn't support voting on both roads and transit projects as part of the same plan. This ST2 proposal may go before voters as early as fall 2008 as part of a transit-only ballot measure. The revisions to the transit elements included in this plan include shortening their completion timeframe from 20 years to 12 years, a 40% reduction, by focusing on a smaller set of the highest-priority expansions. The measure also includes increased measures to promote public accountability in delivering the expansions.

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Sounder commuter trains currently operate in a 74-mile corridor from Everett to Tacoma, with an 8-mile extension to Lakewood underway. ST Express buses operate on every major highway in the region. Link light rail serves downtown Tacoma, and it will open for service between Seattle and Sea-Tac International Airport in 2009. Together, these services carry more than 12 million riders a year reliably around the region to jobs, shopping, school, sporting events and other places they need to go. ¶
Final design for the Link light rail extension between downtown Seattle and the University District is underway, and service is planned to start in 2016.¶
Even with those investments, however, improving transportation continues to be one of the biggest challenges facing this region.¶
Another 1 million people are expected to call this region home in the next 25 years. That's about a 30 percent increase in population and is more than the current combined populations of Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, and Tacoma. Put another way, the population of the central Puget Sound region is growing by almost 45,000 people per year.¶
By the year 2030, growth will lead to a 35 percent increase in employment and a 30 percent increase in vehicle travel in the region. By 2030, the typical commuter could spend nearly an entire work week of additional time stuck in traffic. Weekday rush hour could last from breakfast through dinner, strangling the movement of traffic and freight, jeopardizing our economy, and hurting the environment.¶
<**sp**>With a strong mass transit foundation in place and more growth on the way, additional investment is needed to ensure mobility for citizens and to help the central Puget Sound region's transportation system run smoothly. An expanded mass transit system that builds on what we have is more important than ever.¶
In response, Sound Transit is proposing a plan that builds on the *Sound Mov*... [1]

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ST2: The Future

ST2 includes a major expansion of the Link light rail system. Light rail is currently operating in downtown Tacoma and a nearly 16-mile line is under construction between downtown Seattle and Sea-Tac Airport. That line is scheduled to open in 2009, with an extension from downtown Seattle to the University of Washington next up for construction.

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The ST2 plan builds on these Link light rail lines and the region's investment in Sounder commuter rail and ST Express bus service. ST2 proposes a future in which you can ride a light rail train to your job or appointment from the Overlake Transit Center area of Redmond west to Bellevue, downtown Seattle or the University of Washington; from downtown Seattle to the University of Washington or on to Northgate; or from downtown Seattle to Sea-Tac Airport and then south to Des Moines and Highline Community College. The ST2 plan would extend the rail system to serve approximately __ percent of the region's current population and employment centers, providing a reliable transportation option for most of the region's citizens.

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Because it runs on its own tracks separated from traffic, light rail is quick and reliable. It will take approximately 20 minutes to travel on a light rail train from downtown Bellevue to the International District Station and nearby Qwest Field, 11 minutes from Overlake to downtown Bellevue, 15 minutes from Northgate to downtown Seattle, 30 minutes from downtown Bellevue to the UW, and 37 minutes from Des Moines to Safeco Field. And because trains are

ST2 at a glance

- Adds approximately 23 miles of new light rail
- Adds 14 new light rail stations
- Runs light rail service up to 20 hours a day
- Adds a new streetcar connector line in Seattle
- Forecasts about 240,000 riders a day on Link light rail in 2030

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not stuck in traffic, you can count on your ride being the same every day – rain or shine. With trains running up to 20 hours a day, and every few minutes at peak times, you won't need to memorize a schedule.

A fully implemented ST2 plan will also enhance and expand the current Sounder commuter train and ST Express bus services. The ST2 plan will improve access to the regional system by adding approximately 11,000 new park-and-ride stalls; six new or improved Sounder commuter rail stations and six bus facilities through added parking or other means, and a streetcar connector line connecting Capitol Hill and First Hill to downtown Seattle and the light rail and commuter rail systems.

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When all proposed ST2 projects are completed, half of all work trips to downtown Seattle are expected to be on transit. The number of people taking transit to work during peak commuting hours will increase in other major regional centers as well, including Northgate, the University District, and downtown Bellevue. Together these investments will enable more people to get around reliably and predictably. With ST2 in place, Sound Transit ridership is projected to grow to over ___ million per year in 2030. The system will also have additional capacity to absorb future growth well beyond 2030.

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The ST2 system plan will build approximately $7.8 billion (2007$, not including inflation) or $__ billion (Year of Expenditure $, including inflation) in new mass transit infrastructure around the region, including regional bus, commuter rail and light rail facilities. In addition to these capital improvements, the plan provides funding for operating and maintaining the system. Operations and maintenance costs are estimated at $800 million (2007$) through 2020. The financial plan also funds reserves and debt service – for detailed information see the "Paying for the System Section" later in this document on p. __.

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The ST2 plan is consistent with established long range regional transportation and land use plans. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) created the Vision 2040 plan to be a strategy for directing growth in an environmentally responsible way, while fostering economic development and providing efficient transportation. In addition, the PSRC created the Destination 2030 plan to be the region's comprehensive long-range

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transportation plan. Grounded in Vision 2040's growth management and transportation policies, Destination 2030 provides a multimodal plan for investing in roads, ferries, transit and freight traffic through the year 2030. Destination 2030 is now being updated by the PSRC to reflect the transportation needs of Vision 2040. The new Transportation 2040 regional transportation plan is expected to be complete in 2010.

As the Regional Transit Authority (under Chapters 81.104 and 81.112 RCW), Sound Transit is responsible for regional high-capacity transit system planning in the context of Destination 2030. Sound Transit updated its Regional Transit Long-Range Plan in 2005. Sound Transit has now addressed the next generation of transit improvements by proposing ST2, the logical step forward for mass transit in the central Puget Sound region.

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Sound Transit and RTID have joined together to create the region's first comprehensive proposal for reducing freeway congestion, increasing safety, and adding mobility options and capacity by improving mass transit. ST2 is the transit piece. The roads part is called "Blueprint for Progress." The ST2 and RTID investments are being presented to the region's voters as a broad-based Roads & Transit package in November 2007.¶

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The ST2 Plan

ST2 will substantially expand the regional mass transit system by extending and adding more light rail lines and improving commuter rail and express bus service. This new service will enhance and add high-capacity transit in the region's main travel corridors. The result will be fast, reliable service that cuts through congestion and provides ridership capacity to accommodate the region's needs.

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Value from a high capacity transit system comes from the ability of that system to transport people reliably, rapidly and efficiently. That is only possible when people are able to access the system, and access needs and solutions vary by transit mode and community. In recognition of these varying needs, Sound Transit will, in consultation with its local transit partners and host jurisdictions, conduct Access and Demand Studies for its passenger facilities to evaluate a full range of needs and potential improvements to meet those needs. Evaluation criteria will be developed for each study that is appropriate to the social, environmental, and economic concerns in the affected area. Improvements may include, but are not limited to:

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- pedestrian improvements at or near access facilities; additional bus/transfer facilities for improved feeder bus service connections;
- expanded parking at or near facilities;
- off-site/satellite parking along existing transit routes that connect to the facility, including transit priority treatments to improve the speed and reliability of those routes;
- bicycle access and storage at or near facilities; and
- new/expanded drop-off areas to encourage ride sharing

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Link Light Rail Extensions

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ST2 proposes to add approximately 23 miles of new light rail by extending north from the University of Washington to Northgate, south from Sea-Tac Airport to Des Moines and Highline Community College, and east from Seattle to Bellevue and the Overlake area of Redmond. Light rail trains will provide service to 14 planned new stations up to 20 hours a day and every few minutes during peak commuting periods.

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In addition, funding is established in ST2 for further planning, preliminary engineering, and environmental review of several corridors where light rail would be extended in future phases, including Northgate to Everett Station, Overlake to downtown Redmond and Des Moines to the Tacoma Dome station. ST2 also includes a strategic advance right-of-way acquisition program in these corridors to ensure that crucial properties, which are under threat of development that is inconsistent with project implementation, are purchased early. This will allow Sound Transit to secure property for future projects and pay property owners fair and reasonable compensation as required by federal and state law, to provide more certainty to property owners, and to avoid the complications and additional financial expense of acquiring property that has been recently redeveloped.

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South Corridor – SeaTac to Des Moines

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ST2 adds a light rail extension from Sea-Tac Airport to Des Moines, with two planned new stations at S. 200th Street and the vicinity of Highline Community College. Funds are also programmed to extend the Tacoma Link light rail system within Tacoma if other public or private entities provide matching funds. The exact nature of the extension(s) will depend on the nature of the partnership(s).

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East Corridor—Seattle to Overlake/Redmond

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ST2 expands light rail across Lake Washington via I-90 from downtown Seattle to the Overlake area of Redmond, with 8-9 planned new stations serving Rainier/I-90, Mercer

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Island, South Bellevue, downtown Bellevue, Overlake Hospital, the Bel-Red corridor and Overlake Transit Center.

North Corridor—University of Washington to Northgate

ST2 expands light rail north from the University of Washington to Northgate Transit Center, adding three planned new stations serving the University District, Roosevelt, and Northgate.

Additionally, as discussed more fully in the "Planning for the Future" section on p. ___, Sound Transit will study a potential future Link light rail extension from Northgate to Everett.

ST2 also adds a new streetcar connector line connecting downtown Seattle, First Hill, the future Capitol Hill light rail station, and north Capitol Hill. The new connector will also provide convenient, reliable access to the Sounder commuter rail system and regional bus services.

Sounder Commuter Rail Improvements

The ST2 plan builds on the investments already made for providing passenger rail service between Everett and Lakewood along rail lines owned by Sound Transit and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railway company.

ST2 increases the capacity of the highly utilized Lakewood-Tacoma-Seattle service through additional trains and expanded train lengths. Up to twelve new trains (equivalent to six round trips) will be added to this service. Service capacity will be further expanded by extending trains from seven to eight passenger cars, supported by extending platforms at some stations. Additional locomotives and passenger cars will be acquired to support this capacity and service expansion.

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On the Lakewood-Tacoma-Seattle line, ST2 also includes an improved, expanded and permanent Sounder station in Tukwila and access improvements for commuter rail and bus riders at the Kent, Auburn, Sumner, Puyallup, Tacoma Dome, South Tacoma and Lakewood stations. The ST2 plan also provides for track improvements on existing Tacoma Rail and Sounder lines.

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On the Everett to Seattle line, ST2 includes the construction of a permanent Edmonds Station and access improvements in conjunction with the Washington State Ferries' Edmonds Crossing multimodal terminal project. In addition, access to Mukilteo Station will be expanded in conjunction with the Washington State Ferries' Mukilteo Landing multimodal terminal project.

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Funds are also included to construct, own and operate a commuter rail yard and shop facility that would support the level of service for Sounder trains when at full operational capacity, enabling the agency to more efficiently maintain and operate Sounder.

ST2 includes funds that Sound Transit could contribute to a partnership project intended to test the market for and potentially to establish long-term passenger rail service on the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway's Woodinville Subdivision. This rail line, portions of which the BNSF intends to abandon and which the Port of Seattle is purchasing, stretches from the City of Snohomish to the City of Renton, running to the east of Lake Washington. With the understanding that there are other parties in the region with strong interest in operating passenger rail service on this line and that a state-mandated rail feasibility study by Sound Transit and the PSRC is still underway, Sound Transit specifically intends this project to be accomplished in partnership with other public and/or private parties, particularly along the portions of the corridor located in Snohomish County outside the Sound Transit district. To protect the public's investment in this demonstration of passenger rail Sound Transit's funds will be limited to purchasing or constructing recoverable capital elements, such as real estate, buildings and vehicles.

Deleted: Consistent with Sound Transit's policies about extending services outside its district boundaries, Sound Transit will consider extending Sounder service south of Lakewood to a new station in Dupont and into Thurston County either through a funding agreement with a third party or through annexation of new areas into the Sound Transit district.¶

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ST Express Regional Bus Improvements

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Ridership is increasing on many *ST Express* routes, and demand is expected to continue rising as the ST2 program is implemented. ST2 provides annual operating funds to increase service on routes experiencing high demand in the I-5, SR 520, I-90, I-405, SR 167 and SR 522 corridors by improving service frequency, expanding hours of operation and adding trips to relieve overloads. Many of these service expansions are contingent on purchasing more buses and expanding maintenance and operations facilities, which ST2 will fund, but Sound Transit will implement additional service as quickly as possible. Total annual *ST Express* service hours across the region will be increased by 10 to 15 percent by 2020.

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While Sound Transit continues to assume that the Washington State Department of Transportation will fund and complete construction of the core HOV lane system in accordance with its freeway HOV policy, Sound Transit will contribute to the capital costs of completing transit access facilities on that system. ST2 funds new HOV direct access facilities along I-5 in Snohomish County at the Ash Way and Mariner park and ride lots.

ST2 also improves access to regional bus facilities in the region. ST2 funds park-and-ride and transit center access improvements along I-5 in Snohomish County at Everett Station, Mariner park-and-ride, Ash Way park-and-ride and Lynnwood park-and-ride, and up to 16 lane miles of new business access and transit (BAT) lanes along SR 99 between Everett and SR 525. It also provides funds to expand parking at the Burien park-and-ride, complete BAT lanes along SR 99 in Shoreline and build a new transit center in Bothell in partnership with others.

In the SR 520 corridor, Sound Transit intends to upgrade *ST Express* services to bus rapid transit (BRT), taking advantage of transit speed and reliability improvements that will be made as part of the Washington State Department of Transportation's SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV project. That project will replace the Evergreen Point floating

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bridge with a new structure that will include HOV lanes across Lake Washington, providing continuous HOV lanes in the corridor from Redmond to Seattle. Existing HOV lanes east of Lake Washington will be moved to the inside and transit/HOV direct access facilities and freeway stations will be constructed at key locations to eliminate weaving and speed up buses. The State of Washington also intends to toll portions of the corridor to efficiently manage traffic and maintain smooth traffic flow.

In conjunction with King County Metro Transit bus services in the corridor, Sound Transit will restructure and improve *ST Express* services to improve overall service reliability and frequencies to at least every 15 minutes in both directions all day long on weekdays. Sound Transit will also provide improved passenger amenities such as real-time next bus arrival information at stations and high capacity BRT-type buses. High service levels, streamlined transit facilities, and congestion management in the corridor will result in a fast, reliable, and high capacity BRT system in the corridor.

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Using the System

Sound Transit has used its research & technology and fares programs to find ways of making transit more convenient and easier to use.

For example, Sound Transit is installing vehicle location systems at its Link light rail and Sounder commuter rail stations and at some ST Express transit centers. These systems send real time electronic messages to signs that tell customers when the next train or bus will arrive. These electronic message signs will be in place in 2009 when the Link light rail system opens.

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A decade ago, transferring between transit systems in the region required customers to have several passes or to pay a separate fare on each system. Over the last 10 years, Sound Transit has partnered with local transit agencies to create an integrated fare system that allows riders to transfer easily between transit systems. In 1999, a new regional "PugetPass" was created for Sounder trains and ST Express, Community Transit, Everett Transit, Pierce Transit, and King County Metro buses. Those agencies – and the Washington State Ferries and Kitsap Transit – are working together to implement new "smart card" technology in 2009 that will make it even easier to travel around the region.

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As part of ST2, Sound Transit will continue to explore and apply innovative technology and fare initiatives. Potential initiatives include expanding the "next bus" and "next train" electronic messaging system and installing more transit signal priority equipment to speed buses through congested intersections. Other possibilities include providing bus schedules and real-time "next bus" information on cell phones or personal handheld devices. Ticket vending machines at more locations would make it easier to buy a ticket or reload your smart card. WIFI could be expanded to more Sound Transit vehicles and facilities and electronic transit information kiosks could be installed in more places to provide more information to customers.

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Planning for the Future

ST2 includes funds to study potential future system expansion options, including Link light rail extensions from Northgate to Everett, the University District to downtown Seattle via Ballard, Burien to Renton, and downtown Seattle to Burien via West Seattle. The latter would inform potential updates to Sound Transit's Long Range Plan. Each study will include public and agency outreach, preliminary ridership forecasting, and capital and operating cost estimation.

ST2 also includes funds for a corridor planning study in the I-90 corridor between South Bellevue and Issaquah. This study will evaluate potential technologies, routes, station locations and maintenance facilities and develop conceptual cost estimates, a preliminary ridership forecast and an analysis of potential environmental issues. The study will also include input from citizens and businesses that may be affected by future corridor improvements.

In addition, the ST2 plan includes funds to study bus rapid transit (BRT) in the I-405 corridor. This will include reviewing and coordinating current service in the corridor being implemented by Sound Transit and other transportation agencies, reviewing planned projects and services, exploring opportunities to enhance the BRT system and identifying potential improvements to consider in a future phase of high-capacity transit investments in the region.

These planning studies will help narrow the range of alternatives, evaluate potential routes and station locations, inform local comprehensive planning and position the Sound Transit Board to evaluate options for a future phase of high-capacity transit investments in the region.

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Deleted: Finally, Sound Transit will conduct a planning study to evaluate the potential for high-capacity transit (HCT) technology on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad right-of-way, which is currently in private ownership. The study would evaluate the BNSF corridor between Renton and Woodinville and between Woodinville and Snohomish, including examining opportunities for integration with ... [2]

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Putting the System in Place

Implementing the Plan in Stages

Implementation of ST2 will begin the day after voters approve funding for the expanded regional transit system. Individual projects will be brought into service after they proceed through planning, environmental review, preliminary engineering, property acquisition, final design, permitting, construction, and start-up/testing programs. Transit centers, parking garages and commuter rail stations typically take 5 to 6 years from planning and site selection through opening for service. Light rail extensions are more complex because they travel through multiple jurisdictions, along freeway corridors or across waterways. Light rail extensions can take approximately 4 to 7 years for planning, environmental review, engineering and final design. They then require about 4 to 6 years to build, depending on their length and complexity. Sound Transit continually coordinates with local and state governments to streamline project approval processes while ensuring environmental and community concerns are properly addressed. While putting each component of ST2 in place, Sound Transit will use a variety of proven analytical, project management and review techniques to make sure that the system provides the greatest regional benefits.

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As previously mentioned, the extension of *Link* light rail from downtown Seattle to the University of Washington is planned to open in 2016. By 2020, the ST2 plan anticipates opening the further extensions to Northgate, Overlake and Des Moines, and the First Hill Streetcar connector. ST2 also funds an extension of Tacoma Link as early as 2015 if financial partners step forward.

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By 2013, *Sounder* commuter rail access will be improved to stations in Tukwila, Sumner and Puyallup. Station platforms allowing longer trains with more capacity and more commuter rail service will be added throughout the south corridor by 2015. By 2020, additional station access improvements at Edmonds, Mukilteo, Kent, Auburn, Tacoma, South Tacoma and Lakewood will be completed.

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ST Express regional bus service will be improved in high demand corridors in stages as additional buses and maintenance facility capacity becomes available. Sound Transit will work to put new service on the street as quickly as possible. To the extent possible, Sound Transit will time service additions and changes to respond to ridership demand and utilize new access improvements such as HOV lanes, direct access ramps, and expanded parking and station access improvements as they come on line. Sound Transit will work closely with its transit partners to coordinate, integrate and maximize service.

The Sound Transit Board will evaluate the prioritization, sequencing and actual timing of construction and service start-up of all ST2 projects. This will include ongoing consideration of factors affecting project readiness. The Board may modify project timing as appropriate, in response to the anticipated evolution of project readiness over the ST2 implementation period, and the necessity of coordinating ST2 construction with that of regional highway projects occurring in the same corridors. Some ST2 projects are located in close proximity to Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) projects. To the extent practicable, Sound Transit will coordinate design of its projects with WSDOT, and both parties will work to phase construction of each project to mitigate the overall construction impacts. As ST2 light rail projects are planned and designed, consideration will be given to possible future system expansion options to facilitate future extensions. For example, East Corridor extensions to Issaquah and Kirkland will be considered at the conceptual engineering level during the East Link project planning process.

Throughout the implementation of the Plan, Sound Transit's transit oriented development (TOD) program will strive to achieve pedestrian-friendly development around the high capacity transit stations. The purpose of the TOD program is to promote pedestrian-friendly development in order to achieve reduced automobile use, higher transit ridership, and enhanced livability, walkability, and sustainability in the communities Sound Transit serves. Reductions in fuel consumption and the emission of pollutants, especially greenhouse gases, will result from the shift from cars to walking and transit.

Deleted: Two years later, the ST2 plan anticipates opening the University of Washington to Northgate segment and the First Hill streetcar. Sound Transit also plans to open Sounder commuter rail parking garages in Sumner, Puyallup, Mukilteo, Tukwila, and Edmonds by 2018. Additionally, a parking garage is expected to open at the Burien Transit Center.¶
By 2021, two additional Link light rail segments are planned to be in operation, one from Seattle to downtown Bellevue and the other from Sea-Tac Airport to the Des Moines/Kent area. Sounder parking improvements in Auburn, Sounder track and structure upgrades in Tacoma, and the transit center and/or parking improvements in Bothell and Renton are also expected to be in service.¶
All the remaining Link light rail segments are planned to be complete by 2027. These include segments from Northgate to 164th/Ash Way, from Kent/Des Moines to Tacoma Dome Station, and from Bellevue to the Overlake Transit Center.

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As Sound Transit evaluates potential locations for rail stations and other facilities, consideration will be given to whether there are transit oriented development opportunities at each potential location. Because the achievement of transit oriented and sustainable development is necessarily accomplished in partnership with local jurisdictions, Sound Transit will also evaluate the extent to which jurisdictions are encouraging and permitting land uses and development forms that are in alignment with the TOD program goals.

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As Sound Transit evaluates potential locations for rail stations and other facilities, consideration will be given to whether there are transit-oriented development opportunities at each potential station location that facilitate increased ridership. Sound Transit will also evaluate the extent to which local jurisdictions are encouraging and supporting transit-oriented development.

Approximately midpoint in the ST2 program implementation, Sound Transit will evaluate what additional projects might be funded through a new voter-approved ballot measure. Sound Transit staff will prepare an evaluation of further system expansion and submit it for Board consideration. This evaluation will at a minimum:

- Determine whether ST2 program implementation is on course as planned;
- Analyze the results of the planning studies to draw conclusions on the; appropriateness of pursuing additional corridor development;
- Recommend corridors for additional HCT development; and
- Assess the potential tools available and/or necessary to develop financing strategies for such corridor development (such as federal or state grants, additional revenue authority, extension of existing revenues, other funding partnerships), along with associated risks and opportunities.

Managing the Existing System

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System Access Program

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Convenient and efficient access to boarding locations makes transit available to as many people as possible -- this is critical to the function of a regional transit system and to expanding its ridership. A System Access Program (SAP) is established to promote the development of facilities that improve connections between surrounding communities and stations, transit centers and other boarding locations that are served by Sound Transit and already in operation.

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The SAP aims to leverage existing or planned investments at or near these facilities. For example, in order to improve bicycle and pedestrian access, funds from this program could be matched with funds from other parties to connect a station to the regional trail system. For example, at the Tukwila/International Boulevard Station existing trails lie to the east and a new trail is planned to the west, but none have direct connections to the station. Other potential SAP uses may include new/improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, additional bus bays for connecting bus service, capital improvements that improve bus speed and reliability along routes connecting to stations, and improved passenger drop-off/pick-up facilities at stations.

A portion of the program's funds will be allocated through a competitive process where project ideas will be regularly solicited and evaluated for funding consideration. Evaluation criteria will be established and may include but are not limited to the level of matching funds from outside sources, the ability to overcome small barriers or close small gaps that are present along pedestrian and bicycle routes, and the potential to reduce reliance on auto use and parking for station access.

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Bus/Ferry-Rail Service Integration

Buses and ferries are an integral part of the rail expansion in ST2. Sound Transit is working closely with its transit partners – Everett Transit, Community Transit, King County Metro, Pierce Transit and Washington State Ferries – to develop a coordinated bus/ferry-rail network that fully utilizes the unique qualities and strengths of all transit modes. By coordinating bus/ferry-rail service planning and by designing stations for efficient intermodal connections, the rail expansions proposed in ST2 can strengthen existing bus and ferry systems and achieve region-wide mobility benefits that extend far beyond the rail alignments.

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Providing rail service in high-traffic areas allows buses to avoid congested segments of the roadway system, improving transit's on-time performance and efficiency. Convenient bus and ferry connections to rail stations extend the geographic reach of rail far beyond

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the immediate station areas, providing additional transit connections and expanded regional and neighborhood transit coverage. Since some bus service that operates parallel to rail will no longer be needed, the savings in bus service hours can be reinvested to increase bus service elsewhere.

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A Community Effort

Citizens played a key role in shaping Sound Transit's Long-Range Plan and ST2, and citizens will play an even greater role in ST2's implementation.

Sound Transit will continue its open public involvement process with many opportunities to inform and involve the community. This is particularly important when planning, designing and constructing specific projects so the unique character and needs of each community can be reflected in both the finished project and the steps necessary to get there.

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The Sound Transit District

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The Sound Transit district is more than 1,000 square miles and serves a population of about 2.86 million people. There are currently 52 cities in the district, which includes most of the urban areas of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties.

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Sound Transit is governed by an 18-member board made up of local elected officials including mayors, city councilmembers, county executives and county councilmembers from within the Sound Transit district, plus the Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation.

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Annexations

After voters within the district boundaries have approved a ballot proposition authorizing local taxes to support implementation phases of the ST2 plan, the Sound Transit Board may approve resolutions calling for elections to annex areas outside, but adjacent to, the Sound Transit district.

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The legal requirements to annex areas into the Sound Transit district include the following:

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The Sound Transit Board may call for annexation elections after consulting with any affected transit agencies and with the approval of the legislative authority of the city or town (if the area is incorporated) or with the approval of the area's county council (if it is unincorporated).

Citizens in areas to be annexed are provided an opportunity to vote on proposed annexation and imposition of taxes at rates already imposed within the Sound Transit district boundaries.

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If approved by the voters, changes to the Sound Transit district boundaries may require changes in the make-up of the Sound Transit Board membership, Board membership must be "representative" of the proportion of the population from each county that falls within the Sound Transit district.

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Extending Service Outside Sound Transit Boundaries

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Sound Transit may extend new services beyond its boundaries to make connections to significant regional destinations contingent on agreements with the affected local transit agency and local government agencies. Such service extensions would be implemented at a mutually agreeable cost.

This option would permit areas outside of the Sound Transit district to function as part of the regional system. Extending Sound Transit services outside of its district would require agreements with the affected local transit agency or other appropriate government agencies.

Sound Transit will enter into agreements with agencies beyond the district boundary to integrate fares. This will allow flexible transfers between various transit operators and prevent citizens who live outside the district from being penalized financially for making regional trips by transit instead of an automobile.

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Benefits of the Plan

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Transportation improvements are clearly linked to the growth, development, quality of life and economic vitality of a region. ST2 proposes a range of transit improvements building on the investments Sound Transit has already made, with major extensions of *Link* light rail to serve more of the central Puget Sound region's urban centers, along with improvements in *Sounder* commuter rail and enhancements to *ST Express* bus services and facilities. These improvements add major new capacity in the region's most congested corridors to help serve the transportation demands of the people and businesses already here, as well as anticipated growth.

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Transit investments create value within a community that goes beyond where projects are built and how much concrete is poured. Personal mobility, regional connections, the availability of transportation alternatives, and impacts on growth patterns, quality of life and the economic well-being of the region are all tangible outcomes that must be considered in deciding on transit investments

The regional transit improvements included in ST2 would have many benefits for citizens throughout the Puget Sound region and would further the realization of the long-term growth management and quality of life goals embodied in Vision 2040, the Sound Transit Long-Range Plan and local land use policies. Some of those benefits are briefly described below, and in more detail in Appendix C.

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Transit Ridership

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By 2030, the completed projects in *Sound Move* and ST2, along with continued growth in people riding local buses, means that public transit in the Sound Transit district will be carrying about 160 million trips a year, more than twice as many as in 1996. Almost 100 million of these trips will be on Sound Transit. Most importantly, these new transit trips will be concentrated in the region's most congested corridors on bus routes and rail lines

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serving the region's densest downtowns and urban centers, adding critical capacity where it is most needed to support the region's economy and preserve its quality of life.

The most important measure of any transit investment is whether it attracts riders and serves them well. The most direct way to measure this factor is the numbers of people riding transit. With the ST2 plan, transit ridership in the region is projected to grow by more than 80% over 2006.

Table __ compares regional transit ridership today with ridership projections for 2030, with and without the ST2 investments.

Table __: Regional Transit Ridership and Transfer Rate

	Existing in 2006	2030 without ST2	2030 with ST2
Daily			
Transit Trips	329,000	482,000	525,000
Transit Boardings	424,000	661,000	760,000
Annual			
Transit Trips	98 million	145 million	160 million
Transit Boardings	127 million	199 million	230 million
Percent Using ST	**12%**	**40%**	**60%**
Transfer Rate	1.29	1.37	1.44

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Table __ summarizes the daily and annual boardings projected for Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail and ST Express bus in 2030 with the ST2 Plan.

Table __: Summary of Projected Sound Transit Ridership by Mode in 2030

	Annual Riders	Daily Riders

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Link light rail	76 million	245,000
Sounder commuter rail	7.5 million	27,000
ST Express bus	15.5 million	52,000
Total	**99 million**	**324,000**

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Transit Capacity

The capacity of rail transit is a combination of the size of the vehicles, how frequently they run, and a practical consideration of how many people choose to ride. As with highway capacity, when speaking of rail capacity the important measure is the number of passengers that can be carried during the peak period, when the service is most in demand. This is usually referred to as "peak passengers per hour in the peak direction." Looking at projected ridership for Link light rail in 2030, ten years after ST2 system build-out, we see that it will have the capacity to continue to meet growing demand well into the future.

The per-hour and all-day passenger moving capacity of the ST2 light rail system is quite large, especially in comparison to a roadway of similar width with mixed traffic. While no rail transit system runs fully loaded 24-hours a day, the difference between the ultimate system capacity and the ridership forecast shortly after opening represents the a reserve of capacity for accommodating a large amount of future ridership demand in the decades after the system is built. Table __ below presents the hourly passenger capacity of the ST2 light rail system at points in the system with varying frequencies of train service, at three different loading standards: all passengers seated, a comfortable level of standing passengers and a "crowded" load that might only be accommodated during peak times for short segments such as a major event situation.

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Table : Light Rail System Capacity (passengers per hour per direction)

Peak Frequency	4-Car Trains per	Seated Capacity (74	Comfortable Capacity,	Crowded Capacity

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(Minutes)	Hour	per car)	(150 per car)	(200 per car)
2	60	8,880	18,000	24,000
4	30	4,440	9,000	12,000
6	20	2,960	6,000	8,000
8	15	2,220	4,500	6,000

Travel Time Savings and Reliability

Within the Sound Transit district, bus travel times slow by about 1% per year, mostly due to more congestion on roads and increased pedestrian activity in centers (vehicles making right and left turns at intersections block other traffic while they wait for people crossing the street). Without improvements in transit, therefore, existing bus travel times would be expected to be about 22% slower by 2030.

Expanding the region's network of fixed guideway transit operating in its own rights-of-way separate from roadway congestion can help protect transit riders from that slowing. It can also improve travel times for drivers on the road as more people get out of their cars and on to transit, providing more room on the road for those that remain.

Table __ and Table __ illustrate the expected travel time savings for the region's drivers and transit riders, achieved by the investments included in the ST2 plan. Looking ahead to 2030, 10 years after ST2 investments are completed, the region's highway drivers and transit riders are projected to save about 14 million and 13 million hours a year respectively.

Table __:

Projected Travel Time Savings for Drivers and Freight

	Drivers & Freight 2030 with ST2
Reduction in Annual Vehicle Miles Traveled (Switched to Transit)	210 million

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Annual highway delay reduced	14 million hours

Table __:

Projected Travel Time Savings for Transit Riders

	Transit Riders 2030 with ST2
Daily Hours Saved	40,000
Total Annual Hours Saved	13 million

Reliability means arriving at the same time every time, regardless of gridlock on the roads or snow on the ground. Reliability is a critical factor in how people plan their travel and budget their time. Transportation system reliability has continued to decline in the Puget Sound Region for several decades, both for car drivers and for transit riders. This is primarily related to increases in the severity of traffic congestion, and in the greater likelihood of congestion occurring at any time of day or on any day of the week.

When a person needs to arrive somewhere by a specified time, whether to be on time for work, or to catch a plane or to watch a child's soccer game, they know that if the trip involves one of the region's most congested corridors at peak hours they should allow a great deal of extra time to get there. Increasingly, the problem of congested peak hours has spread to all hours of the day and even to the weekends.

Buses are caught in the same traffic as cars and trucks. Freeway HOV facilities speed buses, but even these ramps and lanes often break down in the crush of peak period traffic, bad weather and accidents. Sounder commuter rail and Link light rail, however,

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although they share some grade crossings with vehicles, operate on their own rights-of-way free from conflicts with other traffic.

Reliability on streets and highways is affected by many things including crashes, stalled vehicles and weather conditions, but the most important factor in the central Puget Sound region is the volume of traffic and delays caused by congestion.

The WSDOT tracks reliability on the freeways for major commutes between pairs of cities, and calculates "95% reliable travel times," that is the amount of time a driver needs to plan for to be sure of arriving on time 19 times out of 20.

WSDOT data, compiled annually in major corridors, shows reliability on the regions highways to be steadily declining. Table __ shows WSDOT's estimates of how much time a driver needs to allow to travel between certain points in the regional system due to the unpredictability of highway travel in the region.

		At Posted Speeds	Avg Peak Travel Time	95% Reliable Travel Time
Route	**Route Description**	(In Minutes)		
From Seattle				
I-5	Seattle to Everett	24	46	68 (48%)
I-5	Seattle to Federal Way	22	37	55 (49%)
I-5/SR 520	Seattle to Redmond	16	30	43 (43%)
I-5	Seattle to SeaTac	13	19	26 (37%)
I-5/I-90/I-405	Seattle to Bellevue	11	18	31 (72%)
I-5/SR 520/I-405	Seattle to Bellevue	11	21	33 (57%)
From Bellevue				

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I-405	Bellevue to Bothell	16	31	44 (42%)
I-405	Bellevue to Tukwila	13	32	44 (37%)
I-405/I-90/I-5	Bellevue to Seattle	11	26	41 (58%)
I-405/SR 520/I-5	Bellevue to Seattle	11	28	37 (32%)
From Other Locations				
I-90/I-5	Issaquah to Seattle	15	26	45 (73%)
SR 520/I-5	Redmond to Seattle	16	37	61 (65%)
SR 167	Renton to Auburn	10	18	33 (83%)

Transit reliability is related to a number of factors, but most significantly to the portion of the transit trip that occurs on a transit-only facility, that is rail or bus operating in its own right-of-way, away from interference with other traffic. **Chart __** illustrates the change in reliability that will be experienced by the region's transit riders with ST2.

Sound Transit's Link light rail operates entirely on exclusive right-of-way. In addition, most of the right-of-way is grade separated with no interference from traffic. Even where there is no grade separation, Link light rail operates in exclusive right-of-way with signal preemption. This allows the service to maintain a very high level of reliability, at all times of the day.

Prior to *Sound Move*, 100 percent of the region's transit travel occurred on buses operating in mixed traffic. Investments Sound Transit made in Sound Move in HOV direct access ramps have reduced travel times and increased reliability for buses operating on the region's freeway HOV system. They have also increased overall highway safety because they eliminate the need for buses to weave across all lanes of traffic to get to the inside HOV lanes. More HOV ramps are proposed as part of ST2. Further, when the Sound Move investments are completed, one quarter of the region's

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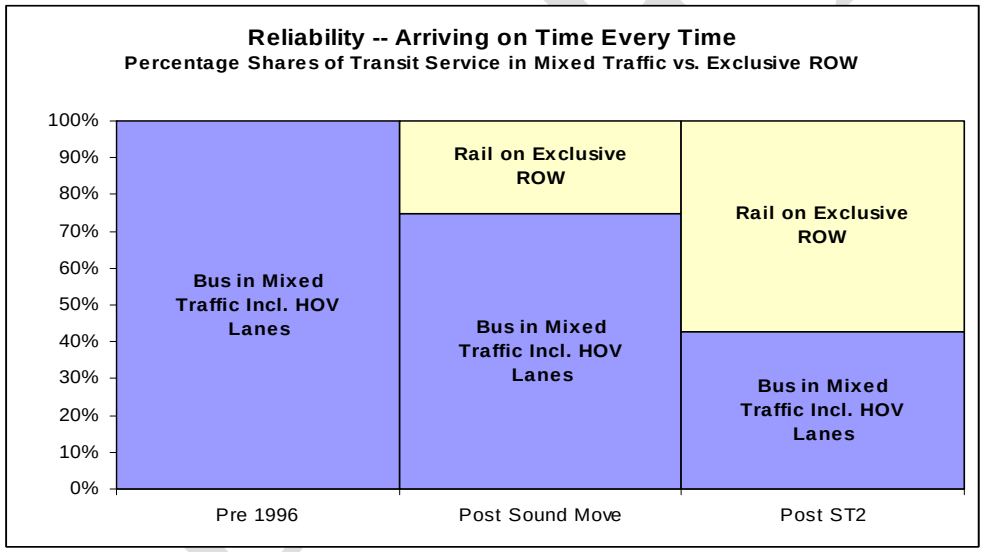
transit travel will occur on high reliability rail lines. ST2 proposes to expand those lines even further.

Looking ahead to the completion of ST2, the share of all transit riders in the region who are on Sound Transit's rail services grows from 12 percent today to 60 percent in 2030. This means that five times as many of the riders will travel on vehicles that don't get stuck in traffic, regardless of the time of day, day of the week, weather conditions, or other factors. This also means much of the bus service in new rail corridors can be reinvested elsewhere in the region, resulting in an overall increase in transit service and access beyond the rail lines themselves.

Chart __: ST2 Transit Reliability



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Transit System Accessibility

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The reach of the regional transit investments made in Sound Move and that would be made in ST2 is much greater than just the immediately vicinity of rail stations and transit centers. Figure __ shows the access to the regional light rail and commuter rail systems

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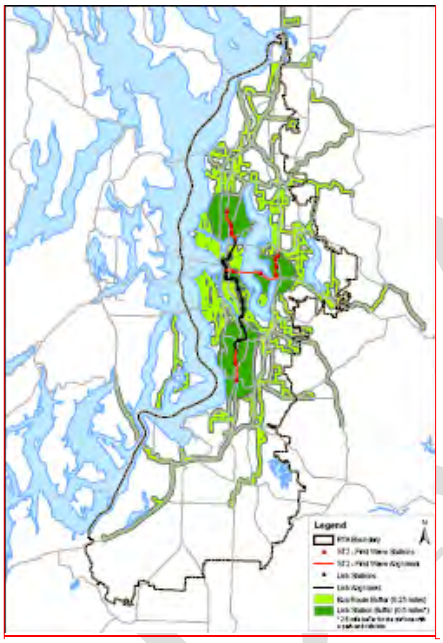
when all ST2 improvements are in service. It depicts the geographic coverage of average ½ mile walk access, average 2 ½ mile park-and-ride access to the rail stations, and the reach of existing local bus services (including average 1/4 mile walk distance to the bus) that would allow access to the rail system with one transfer. Over __% of Sound Transit district residents and over __% of district employees would have convenient access to the region's rail system.

Comment: This is a placeholder map that shows the general concept, but needs refinement



Activity Center Drive-Alone Travel Reductions

Table __ presents the percentage of work and college trips made by transit riders to a selected set of regional centers. Increasing access by transit reduces the need for automobile access that contributes to roadway congestion and delay, fuel consumption and air pollution, and use of scarce land resources for parking. The existing transit share data is from the 2000 U.S. Census Journey-to-Work survey as compiled by the Puget

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Sound Regional Council (PSRC). Percentages include ridership on fixed route, fixed schedule transit service. Excluded are paratransit, dial-a-ride, carpools and vanpools, etc.

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Table __: Projected Activity Center Mode Splits

	Existing Transit Share of Work & College Trips	ST2 2030 Share of Work & College Trips with ST2
Northgate	6 %	8 %
University District	20 %	30 %
Bellevue CBD	8 %	12 %
Seattle CBD	40 %	48 %

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Vehicle Miles Traveled, Fuel Use and Greenhouse Gas Reductions

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New transit riders using the investments in the ST2 plan would reduce daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the region by about 670,000 miles, or 210 million per year. That equates to daily fuel savings of about 22,000 gallons, or 6.8 million gallons per year. Not burning that fuel would save the region about 188 metric tons of equivalent CO2 emissions each day or over 58,000 tons per year, reducing the impact on climate change or regional travel.

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Transportation System Cost and Delay Reductions

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According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2003 the average family in our region spent 18% of its disposable income on transportation, more than any other expenditure except housing. The average household has 2.3 people, owns 2.4 cars, and spends $9,350 a year on transportation.

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The most expensive cost of driving is the cost of owning and insuring a vehicle. A family that can own one less car because of better transit service can save thousands of dollars a year on transportation. Even a family that owns the same number of cars, but drives less, stands to save on vehicle operating costs – gas, oil, parking, tires and maintenance. For example, based on current average vehicle fuel economy and fuel cost of about $4.50 per gallon, ST2 transit investments would save the region about $100,000 per day, or over $30 million per year.

For those commuting by transit to places with high parking costs, the savings in parking alone are substantial. For example, a monthly Puget Pass good for unlimited $2.00 rides (the two-zone peak hour fare on King County Metro) costs $72. According to the PSRC, the average cost of parking in the region's downtowns in 2006 was $138 a month -- $66 more than bus fare. For the average transit commuter to downtown Seattle, savings in parking alone would be approximately $800 a year, on top of the savings on gas and other vehicle operating costs.

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As important as out-of-pocket expenses, the ST2 investments would also save over 14 million vehicle hours of delay per year for drivers, and over 13 million hours per year for transit riders. Rather than sitting in traffic or slower transit, residents would be able to better use their time with their families or in productive work. Based on an average value of time of about $14 per hour that is based on the region's average wage rate[1], that time savings would save residents of the region over $375 million per year in today's dollars.

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[1] Sound Transit, Benefit-Cost Methodology Report, June 2008

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Paying for the System

Financial Plan Framework

State law provides the basis for funding regional transit investment through authorization of voter-approved taxes and bonding. The ST2 plan will be funded by a combination of existing local taxes (four tenths of one percent sales and use tax, three tenths of one percent motor vehicle excise tax), new voter approved local taxes (an additional ___ tenths of one percent sales and use tax), federal grants and fares. Sound Transit will issue bonds backed by local tax collections within the Sound Transit district to help implement the ST2 plan.

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Funding

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The proposed plan is built on the following funding elements (all dollar values in 2007$):

***Sound Move* Taxes:** Revenue generated from Sound Transit's existing voter-approved *Sound Move* taxes (four tenths of one percent sales and use tax and three tenths of one percent motor-vehicle excise tax), will continue to be used in addition to grants, fares, and other miscellaneous sources. The revenue generated by *Sound Move* taxes available to be applied to the ST2 program is estimated to be $___ billion.

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ST2 Sales & Use Tax: The plan will seek voter approval to raise the local sales and use tax an additional five tenths of one percent. Revenue from the 0.5 % sales and use tax increase is estimated to generate $___ billion.

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Federal support: The ST2 plan assumes an additional $___ million in federal grants to build out the system, supplementing local resources. These federal grants for capital programs include Federal Transit Administration formula grants and full funding grant agreements. No state or local grants are assumed for implementing the ST2 Plan.

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Bonding: Because transit facilities provide benefits over a long span of time, it is reasonable to finance a portion of their construction over a period that extends well beyond the construction timeframe. Sound Transit's debt financing capacity will be calculated by evaluating all revenues and deducting total operating expenses for net revenues available for debt service. The Sound Transit Board recognizes that its future bondholders will hold first claim against taxes pledged as repayment for outstanding bonds. The ST2 plan includes an estimated $___ billion in bond financing from 2008-2020.

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Fares: Sound Transit currently collects fare revenues from passengers using the system. As the ST2 system is built out, the agency will continue to collect fares and other operating revenue. The ST2 related fares and other operating revenues are estimated to be $___million from 2008-2020.

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Estimated Costs

The ST2 plan will fund an estimated $7.7 billion in capital investments to improve the regional high-capacity transportation system – Link light rail, Sounder commuter rail, ST Express bus service. The capital costs and other associated costs (all in 2007$) that would be incurred from 2008 through 2020 are as follows:

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Sounder Commuter Rail: $___million for added service, locomotives and coach cars, maintenance facilities, stations and improvements, and the Eastside rail corridor partnership.

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ST Express: $___million for expanded park-and-rides, transit centers, station access improvements, bus fleet, maintenance facilities.

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Link Light Rail: $___ billion for approximately 23 miles of light rail to extend service to Northgate, Overlake and Des Moines. The light rail cost estimate includes the First Hill streetcar connector and Tacoma Link extension partnership funds.

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Transit Operations: $___ million through 2020 for new light rail, commuter rail and regional bus services. The ST2 plan funds transit operations indefinitely. The costs estimated here are for the first 12 years of ST2 transit operations through 2020.

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Deleted: Transit operations include the new service being provided under the ST2 plan, as well as the service enhancement fund for *Sound Move* project services.

System-wide Activities: $___ million through 2020. ST2 will fund system-wide expenditures, including the agency's research & technology and fares programs, future phase planning, administration and other expenditures that are necessary to maintain and plan for regional transit consistent with the voter-approved system plan.

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Debt Service: $___ million through 2020. In order to finance the plan, the ST2 plan anticipates the issuance of 30-year bonds as necessary to maximize the financial capacity required to complete the plan. The $___ million in debt service reflects costs for 2008-2020 for bonds issued for ST2 projects. Debt service will continue until the final bonds are retired, which is anticipated to be up to 30 years beyond the ST2 implementation period.

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Reserves: $___ million through 2020. The plan funds estimated bond reserves and a two month Operations & Maintenance reserve.

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Project Scope and Betterment Control: One tool that Sound Transit has at its disposal to constrain unanticipated growth in the costs of projects during their implementation is a Board-adopted Scope Control Policy. The objective of the policy is to guide staff in responding to requests for enhancements to projects that increase scope, usually with a corresponding increase in costs. The policy requires:

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- Written project scope definitions at every stage of project development,
- Cost estimates and budgets that correspond directly to the project scopes,
- Consideration of project alternatives that are within the project budgets,

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- Inclusion of reasonable and responsible mitigation measures based on specific, significant adverse environmental impacts clearly identified in environmental documents, and which are attributable to those impacts,

- Baselining of the project scope, mitigation measures and budget following the Board's decision at the conclusion of the environmental process,

- Confirmation and re-alignment of project scope and budget at each major project development milestone (e.g., completion of preliminary engineering),

- Addition of partner-financed enhancements to the baseline scope, provided the addition does not negatively affect Sound Transit's project scope, schedule and budget, and

- Project budgets can be increased to incorporate enhancements above and beyond the baseline scope only through a two-thirds majority vote of the Sound Transit Board.

The capital cost estimates for the ST2 plan were developed using standard cost estimating techniques common in the transit industry and recommended by the Federal Transit Administration. They also reflect Sound Transit's experience in designing and building comparable facilities in the central Puget Sound region. Sound Transit's cost estimating methods were reviewed by an independent Expert Review Panel that was appointed by the State of Washington. Table 1 summarizes the estimated cost of building out the ST2 system and operating and maintaining all of the services contained in the ST2 plan.

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Table 1: Uses of Funds (all figures in millions of 2007$)

Sounder Commuter Rail	$
ST Express	$
Link Light Rail	$
Total Capital Program	*$*
Transit Operations	$
System-wide Activities	$
Total O&M	*$*
Debt Service	$
Reserves	$
Total Other	*$*
Total Uses *	**$**

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Table 2 summarizes the revenues that are anticipated to be used to pay for the ST2 system plan.

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Table 2: Sources of Funds (all figures in millions of 2007$)

ST2 Sales & Use Tax	$ -
Sound Move Taxes	$ -
Federal Grants	$ -
Fares & Other Operating Revenue	$ -
Bonds	$ -
Total Sources *	**$**

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* Figures may not add exactly due to rounding error.

For a more detailed sources and uses of funds summary – including methodology, explanatory notes, and distribution of sources and uses by subarea – see Appendix A.

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Risk Assessment

Building a complex regional transit system over an extended period involves risk. Those risks and Sound Transit's approach to addressing them are summarized below.

Tax Base Growth Risks: The plan requires projections of revenue collections over an extended period. The agency relies on an independent revenue forecast that has been reviewed by the State's Expert Review Panel. That forecast projects revenues to grow at ___ percent annually from 2008-20___, compared to a 6.4 percent annual growth from 1980-2005.

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Federal Funds Risk: The ST2 Financial Plan assumes $___ million in federal funds. This assumption is based on an overall __% federal share of the ST2 capital program, compared with a 31% share for prior *Sound Move* projects. However, federal funds are contingent upon future Congressional authorization and may vary from initial ST2 projections due to federal fiscal conditions, timing of ST2 projects and competition from other transportation projects nationwide.

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Costs Risks: With the exception of the light rail extension from the University of Washington to Northgate, ST2 is based on conceptual engineering estimates. The risks for costs to grow beyond initial estimates include: faster than anticipated growth in construction costs; faster than anticipated growth in real estate values; the addition of new required elements or projects not currently included in the plan; and more expensive alignments or station locations than included in the plan. The Sound Transit Board will closely monitor and manage project scope and cost risks to minimize cost increases. In addition, the ST2 plan includes contingencies within the project budgets that allow for uncertainties and unforeseen conditions that arise during the design and construction of the projects.

The ST2 financial plan also contains additional contingency to deal with revenue shortfalls or cost increases. The agency plans to maintain a 50 percent annual contingency (after payment of operating expense) above the amount necessary to pay

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debt service (1.5x net coverage policy). In the event that a subarea's revenues are insufficient to cover its costs, the agency's currently approved policies provide the Sound Transit Board with these options:

- Modify the scope of the projects
- Use excess subarea financial capacity and/or inter-subarea loans
- Extend the time to complete the system
- Seek legislative authorization and voter approval for additional resources.

Financial Policies

Comment: McCartan to re-write based on outcome of pending discussions with Board

The ST2 financial plan is based on the following principles, which are documented in the agency's financial policies and included as Appendix B to the plan. The financial policies also reflect the framework for completing ST2 and provide tools for the Sound Transit Board to respond to future conditions. For more detailed revenue and expenditure information, see Appendix A.

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Distributing Revenues Equitably: Local tax revenue generated in each of Sound Transit's five subareas generally will be used on Sound Transit projects and operations that benefit that subarea. Subareas may fund projects or services located outside of the geographic boundary of the subarea when the project benefits the residents and businesses of the funding subarea.

Deleted: For more detailed revenue and expenditure information, see Appendix A.

Financial Management: To effectively manage voter-approved revenues and to efficiently manage the transit system, Sound Transit will maintain policies for debt and investment management, risk management, capital replacement, fares and operating expenses and grants management.

Public Accountability: Sound Transit will hire independent auditors and appoint a citizen oversight committee to monitor Sound Transit performance in carrying out its public commitments.

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Voter Approval Requirement: The Sound Transit Board recognizes that the taxes approved by voters are intended to implement the system and to provide permanent funding for future operations, maintenance, capital replacement, and debt service for voter-approved projects, programs and services. The Board has the authority to fund those future costs through a continuation of the local taxes authorized by the voters. However, the Board pledges that, after the voter-approved plan is completed, subsequent phase capital programs that continue local taxes at rates above those necessary to build, operate and maintain the system, and retire outstanding debt, will require approval by a vote of the citizens within the Sound Transit District.

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Sales Tax Rollback: If voters decide against extending the system in the future, the Sound Transit Board will initiate steps to roll back the rate of sales and use tax collected. First, an accelerated pay off schedule will be established for any outstanding bonds whose retirement will not otherwise impair or affect the ability to collect tax revenue. Once all debt is retired, Sound Transit will implement a tax rollback to a level necessary to pay for system operations and maintenance, fare integration, capital replacement and ongoing system-wide costs and reserves.

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Sound Transit proposes to expand the regional mass transit system. The agency has been working since 1996 on the first phase of a regional mass transit system in the central Puget Sound region that includes Link light rail, Sounder commuter trains and ST Express buses. This initial phase, called *Sound Move*, was approved by voters in 1996 in response to burgeoning growth and traffic problems.

Sounder commuter trains currently operate in a 74-mile corridor from Everett to Tacoma, with an 8-mile extension to Lakewood underway. ST Express buses operate on every major highway in the region. Link light rail serves downtown Tacoma, and it will open for service between Seattle and Sea-Tac International Airport in 2009. Together, these services carry more than 12 million riders a year reliably around the region to jobs, shopping, school, sporting events and other places they need to go.

Final design for the Link light rail extension between downtown Seattle and the University District is underway, and service is planned to start in 2016.

Even with those investments, however, improving transportation continues to be one of the biggest challenges facing this region.

Another 1 million people are expected to call this region home in the next 25 years. That's about a 30 percent increase in population and is more than the current combined populations of Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, and Tacoma. Put another way, the population of the central Puget Sound region is growing by almost 45,000 people per year.

By the year 2030, growth will lead to a 35 percent increase in employment and a 30 percent increase in vehicle travel in the region. By 2030, the typical commuter could spend nearly an entire work week of additional time stuck in traffic. Weekday rush hour could last from breakfast through dinner, strangling the movement of traffic and freight, jeopardizing our economy, and hurting the environment.

With a strong mass transit foundation in place and more growth on the way, additional investment is needed to ensure mobility for citizens and to help the central Puget Sound region's transportation system run smoothly. An expanded mass transit system that builds on what we have is more important than ever.

In response, Sound Transit is proposing a plan that builds on the *Sound Move* program called Sound Transit 2. The Sound Transit 2 plan (ST2) would expand the existing light rail system to serve three major travel corridors. Link light rail would extend from North Seattle into Snohomish County; across Lake Washington into East King County; and south of Sea-Tac Airport into Pierce County. ST2 would also improve the Sounder commuter rail system and enhance ST Express regional bus service. A map of the ST2 Regional Transit System Plan can be found at p. __.

Sound Move achievements

Nearly 16 miles of new light rail from downtown Seattle to Sea-Tac Airport will open in 2009

Light rail extension to UW will open in 2016

Investing more than $800 million in transit centers, HOV direct access ramps and park-and-rides

74 miles of Sounder commuter rail with 9 stations

Tacoma Link light rail connects Tacoma Dome Station to downtown Tacoma

19 new ST Express bus routes offer all-day two-way service

13,000 new park-and-ride spots with 10,000 already in service

PugetPass easy transfer fare system

The ST2 plan was developed through an open public process over a three-year period. During that period, Sound Transit coordinated closely with cities and counties and conducted substantial public outreach. With more jobs and people on the way, the time is now to continue building our transportation future

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Finally, Sound Transit will conduct a planning study to evaluate the potential for high-capacity transit (HCT) technology on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad right-of-way, which is currently in private ownership. The study would evaluate the BNSF corridor between Renton and Woodinville and between Woodinville and Snohomish, including examining opportunities for integration with a proposed bicycle/pedestrian trail, for consideration as part of a future phase of high-capacity transit investments for the region. The study will include developing conceptual costs, ridership, potential station locations, examination of the compatibility of different HCT modes with neighborhoods and jurisdictions along the corridor, and integration with existing and planned high-capacity transit. The study will be implemented concurrent with planning for a bicycle/pedestrian trail on the BNSF right-of-way to ensure compatibility of the trail with future HCT. Sound Transit will seek to partner with adjacent jurisdictions and other appropriate agencies in conducting this study. Sound Transit may also employ a strategic advance right-of-way acquisition program in this corridor if additional funding, cost savings or partnerships are identified during the ST2 program, provided such expenditures do not reduce funding available for the high-priority extension to downtown Redmond such that construction of this segment would be delayed.

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